

News Release

Tastefully Simple Founder and CEO Jill Blashack Strahan Speaking at the U of M, Crookston on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, at Noon in Kiehle Auditorium

*By Itollefs on Tuesday, February 12, 2013*Tastefully Simple Founder and CEO Jill Blashack Strahan will speak at the University of Minnesota, Crookston on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, as part of an entrepreneurship speakers' series sponsored by the Center for Rural Entrepreneurial Studies (CRES). Her presentation entitled Small Beginnings--Big Dreams will take place at noon in the Kiehle Auditorium. The event is free and the public is welcome.

Following the presentation, Blashack Strahan will be available to sign her book, Simply Shine: Stories That Stirred the Fire. In the book, she shares her inspirational journey with Tastefully Simple. The books will be available for purchase that day.

As a top female entrepreneur and author, Blashack Strahan is an inspiration to entrepreneurs and women across the nation. She was born and raised in Villard, Minn., and grew up on her family's farm, where she was deeply influenced by her father's entrepreneurial spirit. She managed and owned Jill's Grill in Villard and eventually started a retail gift basket shop. Then her future took a revolutionary turn. Prior to selling her business in 1994, Jill participated in a Holiday Crafters Tour to promote her gift baskets. She provided samples of the easy-to-prepare foods and experienced remarkable sales. Jill realized the power of taste-testing and the idea of Tastefully Simple was born.

Tastefully Simple is an award-winning \$100 million company with more than 300 employees and some 21,000 independent consultants. Blashack Strahan is recognized as an exceptional CEO, having won numerous awards for her achievements and unique philosophies of positivity and abundance.

Background

Funded through a grant from the Department of Education, CRES assists entrepreneurs in Northwestern Minnesota with the development and creation of their entrepreneurial enterprise. CRES, located on the Crookston campus, serves eleven counties including Beltrami, Clearwater, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.

The mission of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurial Studies (CRES) is to encourage entrepreneurship through educational leadership, applied research, and insightful consulting. The CRES engages the students, faculty, and research facilities of the University of Minnesota in Crookston in order to stimulate the entrepreneurial culture and strengthen the economic vitality of northwest Minnesota.

The CRES is housed in Dowell Hall 117. For information, call 218-281-8595 (cres@tc.umn.edu), or visit www.umccres.org.

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 27 bachelor's degree programs, 18 minors, and 39 concentrations on campus--as well as 10 degrees online--in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.



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